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MEMOIR

OF

HON. WILLIAM APPLETON.

PREPARED AGREEABLY TO A RESOLUTION

OF THE

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

BY

REV. CHANDLER ROBBINS, D.D.

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With an Appendix.

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MEMOIR

OF

HON. WILLIAM APPLETON.

IN the year 1635, Samuel Appleton came from Little Waldingfield, in Suffolk, Eng., with his family, and settled in Ipswich. Descended from an ancestry of good repute in his native country, he became the progenitor of a highly respected race in the land of his adoption. The beautiful Memorial of him published in Boston in 1850 renders it superfluous to renew the familiar account of his lineage. Whoever will refer to that volume, will find that in every period, from that of his remotest known ancestor, John Appulton of Great Waldingfield, who died in 1414, the family name has never failed to be worthily represented. Not only the commemorative tributes of this Society, but the annals of our State and National legislatures, the records of various institutions of learning, charity, and religion, the public eulogies and private encomiums of the citizens of Boston, and even the commercial and industrial prosperity of New England, bear testimony to the honorable manner in which it has been sustained in the thirteenth generation.

The instances must be very rare, in which, in a single city, four individuals of one kindred and name, and in the same grade of natural descent, have contemporaneously made their own way from humble beginnings to such high distinction in the same calling as was lately attained by the three brothers, Samuel, Nathan, and Ebenezer Appleton,* and their cousin William,— a sketch of whose life we are about to give. They were so intimately and pleasantly associated in life, and their images are naturally so grouped together in our remembrance, that we could not speak particularly of one till we had first made respectful mention of the rest.

William Appleton was born in the North Parish of Brookfield, Mass., Nov. 16, 1786. His father, Rev. Joseph Appleton, was born in Ipswich in 1751; graduated at Brown University in 1772; was ordained minister of the Second Church in Brookfield, now the First Congregational Church in North Brookfield, in 1776; and died in July, 1795.† He was a man of respectable abilities, approved scholarship, and exemplary Christian character.

His mother was Mary, daughter of Jacob Hook, a gentleman farmer of Kingston, N.H., whose estate was large

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* Ebenezer Appleton died in April, 1833, at the age of forty-eight. He was a man of more than ordinary talents, and of considerable literary taste and culture, genial in his disposition, and popular in his manners.

† The only work ever published by him was a controversial theological pamphlet of thirty pages. There is an elegant monument to him in the churchyard of North Brookfield, with suitable inscriptions, erected by his son, the subject of this Memoir.

Among the last of Hon. William Appleton's benefactions was the contribution of five thousand dollars to the First Congregational Society of North Brookfield, for the purchase of a library for the use of the minister. It is called the Appleton Library.

We are indebted for these facts to Rev. C. Cushing, the present pastor of the church in North Brookfield.

for that place and period. At the death of her husband, who bequeathed to her a small property and the sole charge of five young children, — two sons and three daughters, — she removed to her native place, and occupied a farm of moderate value, which she had inherited from her father. In the year 1798, she was married to Major Daniel Gould, of Lyndeborough, N.H.; and, with her children, took up her abode in that town. Many of the traits of her character bore a striking resemblance to those which afterwards appeared in her son. She had a strong mind, a quick apprehension, a sound judgment, and an unusual capacity for business. Although of feeble health, she was energetic and persevering. Her conversation was often playful and witty, and occasionally seasoned with a spice of satire: though all these qualities were duly held in check; for she was a Christian, both by profession and practice. Her son has recorded his deep sense of obligation to her for having shaped and controlled his character. In a brief notice of her life, written on the day of her death, he says, "From the time my father died, she was very particular in giving her children religious instruction, and often prayed with them in her chamber. I have lost in her, not only the faithful guardian of my infancy, but the discreet monitor of my youth, and counsellor of my maturity."

She was evidently a fine specimen of the best class of New-England mothers; to whom, more than to any other source, are to be traced those sound principles, virtuous habits, and practical qualities, by means of which their children have attained both material pros-

perity and a fair moral fame. Her death took place at Mount Vernon, N.H., June 25, 1842, in her eighty-seventh year, after she had long enjoyed the fruit of her maternal fidelity in witnessing the successful career of her son.

In tracing that career, as well as in estimating Mr. Appleton's character, we have been permitted to avail ourselves of a private diary, which he had kept, with occasional interruptions, during a period of nearly fifty years. It fills seven manuscript volumes, evidently written without the slightest reference to posthumous use. It consists of very brief and simple notes of incidents, especially interesting to the writer, connected with his family, his business, the state of his health, and his religious experience and duties; to which are occasionally added reminiscences of early life; impressions of men; obituary sketches of his friends; and views, both retrospective and prospective, of commercial, financial, and industrial affairs. Although intended exclusively for his own perusal, there is nothing in this journal which would not bear general inspection. On the contrary, it exhibits the writer, off his guard and in his interior life, in a highly creditable and amiable light. It reveals such conscientiousness, such an humble estimate of himself, such a true and lively affection for his family and friends, such a constant conflict with the love of the world and the desire for riches, and such gratitude and submission to Providence, as are worthy of respect and sympathy.

In using this diary, it will be our endeavor not to violate the generous confidence of the living, nor the

delicate reserve which is due to the private papers of the dead. No further reference will be made to it than may be necessary to such a truthful representation of his character as alone would be sanctioned by himself, or conducive to those moral and Christian ends which were evidently near to his heart, and to which, we are persuaded, he would desire, above all things, that his biography should be subservient.

He was sent to school at an early age, first at New Ipswich, and afterwards successively at Francestown and Tyngsborough. In 1801, he made his first trial of business as a clerk in a store at Temple, N.H., kept by Mr. Artemas Wheeler. His capacity and good conduct made such a favorable impression upon his employer, that, at the age of nineteen, he took him into partnership. At the expiration of a year, having found that a country store afforded a too limited field for his abilities and ambition, he sold his stock, and interest in the firm; and with the small property which he had inherited, together with what he had earned, came to Boston. In alluding to this period, he was scrupulously careful not to appropriate the remark, intended to be complimentary, which was sometimes applied to him, as it has been to so many other of our wealthy citizens, — that he came from his country home with nothing but "a small bundle in his hand, and a few cents in his pocket." The sum which he actually brought was small enough, in contrast with what he afterwards accumulated, to accredit his talents for business; and the very fact that a portion of it had been already saved, and the remainder earned, before his arrival, throws back upon his youth the merit

of those same qualities which were afterwards so conspicuously exemplified in his maturity.

The following memoranda, relating to the early stages of his business-life, are copied from his journal: —

"After I came to Boston, I resided for a short time with How and Spear, who kept a West-India goods store. In 1807, I went into business with Mr. N. Giddings. We kept at the corner of India Street and Central Street, — the only store then occupied in the street. (?) Our business was the buying and selling of West-India goods and crockery-ware. We dissolved our connection in the autumn of 1809. Then, considering myself worth about four thousand dollars, I bought the ship 'Triumphant,' at Salem, in connection with Upham, Gassett, and Co., for five thousand dollars, and went with her to Fayal, where I had her put under Portuguese colors, and despatched her to Liverpool; I taking passage with Mr. and Mrs. Bowdoin in another ship. On my arrival at Liverpool, I found my ship had been captured by a French privateer: but she was fortunately retaken a few weeks after, and brought to Plymouth; whither I went to take charge of my property. I remained in England till July; when I embarked in the brig 'Eliza,' Captain Gardner, with about ten thousand pounds' value of goods, for account of myself and Parker, Appleton, and Co. These goods, and another importation, I sold; and, at the end of the year 1811, found myself worth about ten thousand dollars. I went from Philadelphia to North Carolina, where I loaded two vessels with naval-stores for England. From thence I went to Charleston, S.C., and took passage in the ship 'Ceres,' Captain Webber, for Liverpool; where I found that an embargo was laid in the United States, which was considered preparatory to war with England.

"In June, 1812, I was in the House of Commons, listening to the debates of that body: when it was announced that the orders in Council which related to the American ships would be modified or repealed; these orders being supposed to be the

cause of difficulty between the two governments. I at once commenced purchasing goods, and, within one month, had goods valued at thirty thousand pounds on the way, or in readiness to be shipped, to the United States; when information arrived that war had actually been declared by the United-States Government. This intelligence caused me much trouble and anxiety. In August, I embarked for Boston in the ship 'Roxanna.' On my arrival, I found great distress and apprehension among the people on account of the war. When I had closed up my importations, and made a settlement of affairs with N. W. and C. H. Appleton, I thought myself worth sixty thousand dollars. . . . I did not attend to any business of importance during the war."

In January, 1815, Mr. Appleton was married to Mary Ann Cutler, — a lady whose graces of person were equalled by the estimable qualities of her mind and heart, and whose Christian faith contributed as much to the establishment of her husband's religious character as her domestic virtues to the happiness of his home.

"In the spring of 1815, after peace had been made with Great Britain, I laid my plans for future business; and immediately commenced the building of the ships 'Telegraph,' 'Courier,' and 'Minerva.' Before they were finished, I was attacked with the dyspepsy, which was attended with great prostration of strength, nervous irritability, and all sorts of unpleasant feelings. I contended with the disease till the autumn; when, in November, I embarked for Charleston, where I passed the winter, without any improvement in health. The succeeding summer was spent in travelling, but brought no alleviation of my symptoms: on the contrary, my condition was miserable. The irritability increased; but God knows how great suffering produced it, and how difficult it was to be controlled. In the autumn, I sailed with my wife for the Mediterranean. We passed the winter in Sicily; visited Rome,

Paris, and London; and, towards the close of the year 1817, embarked for Charleston. In April following, we returned to Boston; my health having been much improved during our long absence.* This year (1819), I went into business with Messrs. Paige and Chase. Our copartnership continued for six years; during which I carried on considerable additional business on my own account."

Such is his own simple and summary record of a commercial career, which, when we take into view its humble beginnings and his feeble health, in connection with the sagacity and enterprise displayed and the success accomplished, is almost without a parallel. He had been in Boston but eighteen years, and was not yet forty years old, when he retired from the firm last mentioned; yet, at that period, no man in the town, of his own age, had made so much money, and not more than two or three were possessed of an equal amount of property.

Having now released himself from the routine of active business, although still retaining an interest in commerce and manufactures, Mr. Appleton found a congenial field of duty and enjoyment in the society and education of his children. To all the other blessings with which Providence had enriched him, was added that of a large and interesting family. Few men have had stronger domestic affections, and few a more attractive home in which to cultivate and gratify them. Though grateful for all the favors of Heaven, there was

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* As a measure of the increase of the value of real estate in Boston, the following memorandum is of some interest: "In the autumn of 1816, I purchased from Mr. Nathan Appleton the house in Beacon Street, in which I have since lived, for the sum of fifteen thousand dollars."

none which he appreciated so highly, or so often thankfully acknowledged, as this. Not a week, it might almost be said, not a day, passed by, during the latter half of his life, in which some kind reference was not made in his diary to one or another of his children. Every circumstance of the slightest interest connected with their condition is recorded. Every sign of progress in knowledge or virtue, which displayed itself in either of them, is noted with evident delight. Every pleasant family gathering at dinner, or in the evening, is registered, together with the names of all who were present. Every absence or sickness or sorrow is marked with a sympathetic and regretful recognition.

With the exception of an occasional journey for the benefit of his health, and the loss of one of his children, who died in infancy, this rare domestic felicity suffered no serious interruption for many years. At length, the inevitable shadows began to fall, in quick succession, upon his home and his heart. In 1836, his oldest son William, whose health had been for some time declining, died at Schaffhausen, in Switzerland. Possessed of every quality which endears a son to a father, together with those which give promise of a useful and honorable life, and are most flattering to parental pride, the tidings of his death unsealed the deepest fountain of grief. It was the first great affliction which Mr. Appleton had ever experienced, and it touched him in the tenderest point. It was the first severe test which had ever been applied to his faith; and, happily, his faith was adequate to the trial. The notice of the event in his journal, though it betokens his anguish, attests also

his submission. It is so plaintive, that one can hardly read it without a tear; and yet so devout and acquiescent as to excite admiration.

"I had suffered," he writes, "more than can be described, after hearing of William's serious sickness, till I heard of the closing scene. During the interval, I was so ill as to be confined to the house. When the sad tidings came, the shock was great. Our friends gave us their sympathy, and did all in their power to alleviate our sorrow; but we found our consolation from other than earthly comforters. I now feel that God has taken him to himself. I think of him with the greatest pleasure. A thousand incidents in his short life appear to me in the most delightful retrospect. His imperfections have disappeared. I can truly say with his uncle, Mr. Nathan Appleton, who was with him in his last hours, 'He had less of earthly dross than any one I ever knew.' The recollection of his pious resignation in the approach of death is more valuable to me than any thing in this world. He is gone." *

One bond which bound him to earth was now broken. His heart dutifully accepted the sad but providential release, and rose towards heaven. The rupture of other strong and beautiful ties helped its higher ascent. Four children, all of mature age (two sons and two daughters), were successively taken from him. He gave them up, one after another, with increasing submission to God;

* Being in Europe not long after William's death, the writer, who had known him in his youth, out of love and respect to his memory, left his travelling companions and his prescribed route to visit his grave in a churchyard at Schaffhausen. A chaste monument had recently been erected to mark the spot, of which we made a sketch at the time. With a melancholy satisfaction, after so many years, we embrace this opportunity to associate a brief tribute to the son with a memorial of the father. To do so is not so much to assume a privilege of affection as to discharge a biographical duty; for a pure and virtuous child is not only an ornament to the memory of his parents, but an attestation of their worth.

but such repeated bereavements took a deep hold upon his heart, and cast a shade of seriousness over his subsequent life.

The death of his second son Amory, which occurred in 1843, was the heaviest loss of all, and left the deepest impression upon his character. Each of the other children is tenderly commemorated in his journal, and ample justice rendered to their peculiar endearments; but for him he mourns not only as for a son, but a friend. He was, in all respects, after his own heart. Amiable in disposition, sound in judgment, as sagacious in business as his father, and perhaps more prudent, strong in moral principle, and, to crown all, a Christian in faith and practice, he had not only secured his father's unlimited confidence, but such an influence over him as no other person could exert.

"I loved him," he says, "most dearly. He was the best of sons: of late years, my companion, my friend, my adviser. We took our daily walks together; we went to the house of God in company; together we knelt at the altar; in public and in private, we lifted up our supplications in unison to our Creator. We were more nearly brought together than most fathers and sons. We had entire confidence in each other. He would tell me my faults; and I heard them from him with a better spirit than I should from any other. I was proud of him. God has taken him. May it humble my pride, and teach me to trust to the Saviour! I love to think of his amiable manners, of his kind checks when I spoke too quickly, of his truly religious feelings, and all our intimate and pleasant associations in business, in private intercourse and prayer, and in public worship. His death changed most of my plans of business. It is indeed a sad event to part with such a son; but it

is the will of Heaven, and I would not acknowledge myself so selfish as to wish him back again to contend with this sinful world."

We learn from this extract, that not the death only of his children, but their lives also, exerted an elevating influence upon his character. His chief desire with regard to them was, not that they should bask in the sunshine of prosperity or win the honors of this fleeting life, but that they should establish virtuous characters, and become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. While providing for them the advantages of the best schools and the best masters, that they might receive an education suited to their high social position, it was his especial care, in full sympathy with their excellent mother, to furnish them at home with Christian nurture and admonition. In this highest direction of parental duty, his constant and best efforts were exerted: and here also he reaped the richest reward, not only in the satisfaction of seeing them gathered into the church on earth, and, one after another, going to rest in Christian hope, but also in the corresponding increase of his own faith, by means of his prayers and labors on their behalf, and through sympathy with their spiritual advance. Indeed, the period of his deepest Christian experience commenced before Amory's death, and was evidently connected in part with the influence of his earnest piety.

For many years, Mr. Appleton had been more or less under the sway of those religious principles which were instilled into his mind in infancy at the pastor's fireside in Brookfield, and afterwards diligently fostered by the

prayers and counsels of his faithful mother. He had been always scrupulously observant of the forms of religion, both in public and private; maintaining daily family devotion; never absenting himself from public worship on the sabbath, except from sickness or necessity; and usually attending, in addition, the special and occasional services of the Episcopal Church. All along through his mature life, there are traces of a powerful struggle going on in his heart between his worldly desires and his religious convictions. The former, strongly and abundantly supported by a brilliant array of allurements, though sometimes earnestly resisted, had never been effectually overcome: the latter, re-enforced from above, though occasionally baffled, had often returned to the conflict with renovated vigor. Yet the issue was still in suspense.

At length, in the year 1842, the religious purposes and aspirations of many years seem to have been providentially brought to a head. He devoted himself in earnest to Christian duties. His charitable bestowments were multiplied. He built St. Stephen's Church in this city, at a cost of twenty-five thousand dollars, and gave five thousand dollars for a Mission Church in China; besides seeking out other methods of dispensing alms, which he seemed to do with a will. He even took counsel with his son Amory as to the propriety of consecrating all his income, beyond his necessary expenses, to the service of Christ and the Church; and seriously meditated the noble purpose to do so. "The thought of having it in my power," he wrote at that period in his diary, "to do something to extend this

religion, which now makes me so happy even in sickness and pain; with such happiness as I could not find in health, surrounded with gay and pleasant friends, and enriched with all the comforts and luxuries of life, — the thought of having it in my power to lead others to believe in the cross of Christ fills me with grateful delight. May God Almighty strengthen me in well-doing!"

Mr. Appleton's character could not be justly portrayed without a reference to this important crisis in his religious life. However he may have been regarded by the public, and by those who met him occasionally in society and in business, the most marked and interesting feature of his real, his interior life, was the constant struggle to which we have alluded, on the part of the religious element, to obtain the ascendency over his whole nature; and that epoch which he himself, and all who knew him best, regarded as the most eventful of his career, was the period in which he assumed a decisive Christian stand. He may not, in all respects and under all circumstances, have afterwards manifested the temper of a Christian; he may not have wholly overcome the love of the world; and he certainly did not fully carry into execution the disinterested purpose of his best hours: but, to admit as much as this, what is it but to acknowledge that he was subject to the same infirmities which many good men have had occasion to regret in themselves, and encountered the same hinderances which beset the path of every one who would live a godly life!

There are few men of business and wealth who more justly deserve the name of Christian, — a name

that we would never incautiously or indiscriminately apply. But we cannot call in question the validity of his title to that best of human distinctions, when we regard his moral purity and integrity; his regular and reverential observance of the outward forms of religion; the number and magnitude of his charitable bestowments; his frequent and liberal contributions to the institutions and enterprises of the Church; his unfeigned trust in God, and submission to the divine will; and his habitual endeavors to live in preparation for death and immortality.

The only qualification which has been made with reference to Mr. Appleton's claim to be commemorated as emphatically a Christian merchant, so far as we are aware, is that he was inordinately devoted to the acquisition of money. The simple fact of his having been a zealous and successful man of business and having accumulated a vast property, may, of itself, be regarded by some as a sufficient ground for such abatement. But there are other facts and considerations, not so immediately patent, which justice requires us to place in the opposite scale. We cannot doubt — in view of the extreme truthfulness for which he was distinguished, and which especially characterizes his private records — that the real purpose of his life is sincerely revealed in sentences like the following, which are found inscribed at intervals in his diary: —

"My wish is to make religion my first and great object in life. . . . I feel a deep interest in the cause of missions; and my inclination is to give the bulk of my income to religious objects, — not to missionaries only, but to the education of mini-

sters, and the encouragement of all workers for Christ. . . . I feel that the true test of the sincerity of a man's religion is his desire to impart it to others. . . . Most gladly would I increase and multiply my contributions, if I could only find objects that I could entirely approve, and be satisfied that larger bestowments would do good, and not harm. To give to individuals does not always benefit them; and even to give to churches sometimes takes from the energy and efforts of their members. Oh, may God purify my motives, and bless my gifts! . . . I have parted with a large fortune; but I have more satisfaction in what is gone than in what is left."

These are not the utterances of one who makes Mammon his god. And that they are not mere words, is evident from those numerous and sometimes munificent deeds of charity to which we have already referred, amounting in value to nearly half a million of dollars.

We do not deny, what he himself frankly admitted, that he loved the excitement and enterprise of trade, and found a keen satisfaction in success. His talents and training, his tastes and habits, peculiarly disposed and qualified him for a mercantile career. He was made for a merchant; and, as such, it was his instinctive and laudable aspiration to attain to eminence. He could not do this without being diligent in business, strict in his accounts, sagacious in his adventures, and prudent in his investments. He felt that the legitimate result, as well as the test and measure, of genius and energy in his vocation, is the gainful issue of commercial enterprises. Not to make money, would be, in one of his profession and with his capacities, a negligent use of his "five talents," and a forfeiture of that reputation and influence which nature and circumstances had placed

within his reach, and which it was not ignoble to desire. It is true, that a course of life in which the exercise and improvement of one's talents is thus involved with worldly cares, and the pursuit of riches, is accompanied with great hazard both to the moral and religious principles; and very few persons have passed through it with a "conscience void of offence towards God and towards men." But the course itself is one of those which seem to be providentially appointed for men, and the dangers are inseparable from it. That it was the path providentially marked out for himself, Mr. Appleton never doubted. He could not withdraw from it, without doing violence alike to his natural inclinations and his moral judgment. The sole alternative, therefore, was to go forward, and encounter its temptations while discharging its duties. It was a hard battle, and it closed only with his life; but he "fought a good fight, and kept the faith."

Many instances might be adduced to show that the eager prosecution of lucrative enterprises, which was one of Mr. Appleton's characteristics even to the last, and was by many confounded with an inordinate desire for money, was attributable, in a great degree, to other and more honorable motives. His strong and active intellect, stimulated by a nervous temperament, continually impelled him to plan and execute large and difficult enterprises.

"I must be busy," he said. "I don't know how to stop. . . . I love best to do that which is the most difficult. . . . That which others would not undertake pleases me most. . . . If my natural insight enables me to see farther than

most men in certain directions, my nature also compels me to make use of this endowment. . . . I can't help seeing openings for profit, neither can I help availing of them. I pray God to keep me from being avaricious, and proud of my success; but I cannot bear the shame of falling below my own powers, and being left behind by those who are not my equals."

In accordance with the spirit and principles expressed in such sentences, he wrote as follows, in his diary, during the last few months of his life, while some of his friends were wondering at the interest which he still manifested in financial projects: —

"We are going rapidly into a paper currency. Prices of all kinds of stocks and commodities will materially advance. I cannot avoid taking an interest in speculations, and taking advantage of the rise which I foresee. I am endeavoring to show the younger part of the merchants, that an old merchant of seventy-five has faculties and energy left. *At the same time, I am thinking what I shall do with the profits on the pepper and saltpetre. I shall give part to the public, and part to destitute friends.*"

That such generous intentions were not illusory, the writer, if no one else, can bear witness. Mr. Appleton once consulted him as to the best mode of permanently relieving the necessities of a respectable clergyman, distantly connected with him by marriage, and to whom he had often generously contributed. It was first proposed to raise a sum sufficient for the purpose among a number of wealthy gentlemen to whom the individual in question was known. After some delay in selecting the persons to be applied to, and in other arrangements for starting the subscription, the writer at length frankly expressed his persuasion, that nothing could be done till Mr. Appleton had first signed his own name, together

with the amount that he would give. He paused thoughtfully for a few minutes, and then said, "After all, why should I trouble you to carry about a subscription-paper? My income is very large: I must give a good deal of it somewhere. The only question with me is, where I can bestow it best. What do you think of the propriety of my giving ten thousand dollars to Mr. —— in trust for him and his family?" The reply did not, of course, discourage the generous thought.

This interview occurred on the day before Christmas. The next morning, Mr. Appleton rose at an early hour; and eager, as he always was, to carry his purpose into effect, and still more eager, in the nobleness of his nature, to brighten the dawn of that Christian festival for his poor friend, carried a note to his door with his own hand, announcing "good tidings" which filled his heart and his home with joy.

Mr. Appleton's kindness, however, did not exhaust itself in this munificent gift. Having taken hold of the case, he could not leave it till it was completely provided for. To relieve his friend from certain immediate embarrassments, a further sum was necessary. This was easily collected from a small number of benevolent individuals; and, in a few days, he had the satisfaction of setting a burdened heart free from present bondage, and securing a whole household against future want.*

* Since the above was written, we have ascertained that Mr. Appleton, shortly before his death, actually distributed the profits of his speculations in pepper and saltpetre, amounting to about seventy thousand dollars, in the manner referred to in his diary. With his very last breath, he indicated to his family, in scarcely intelligible accents, an object to which he desired to appropriate the sum of five thousand dollars. His request was complied with by his children immediately after his decease.

Much of his devotion to business was in a high degree disinterested. Not only did he seek to acquire property that he might have it in his power to give liberally, both publicly and privately; but some of the most arduous enterprises in which he engaged were to manage the perplexed affairs of his friends; to carry them through periods of great financial peril, and to save them from ruin. It is not too much to say, that, in several well-known instances of this sort, he did what no other man was found willing to attempt, if, indeed, any other would have been able to perform. For such services, he received, in many instances, the unbounded gratitude and respect of those to whom they were rendered; and will be held, by all who have knowledge of them, in honorable remembrance. Referring to this subject, an intimate friend of Mr. Appleton writes as follows: —

"There was one characteristic of his which deserves an honorable mention by the side of any others. That was his pertinacity in carrying out whatever beneficent thing he took in hand, at any cost of time or of money. There are a number of instances in which his social kindness saved the fortunes of his friends from wreck, and many more in which it relieved wants of the minutest sort and in the most effective way: showing a thoughtfulness and sagacity, and a self-identification with the suffering, which was surprising as it was admirable. Everybody, therefore, whom he had occasion to aid by any personal interest, always entertained for him a deep and tender affection, which of itself is ample voucher for the substantial excellence of his character." *

After the dissolution of his partnership with Messrs. Paige and Chase in 1826, to which reference has here-

* Rev. Alexander H. Vinton, D.D., formerly Rector of St. Paul's, Boston.

tofore been made, Mr. Appleton pursued his business alone, occupying a counting-room in State Street, till 1841; when he admitted as partners his son, James Amory Appleton, and Mr. (now Hon.) Samuel Hooper, under the style of William Appleton and Co. In 1852, several years after the death of his son, Messrs. F. G. Dexter and John H. Reed were received into the firm, which always maintained its high position among the commercial-houses, not only of Boston, but of the whole country.

The high esteem in which Mr. Appleton was held, both for his abilities and experience as a merchant and his excellent qualities as a man, often suggested his name to his fellow-citizens in connection with important offices, which his feeble health and general disinclination to public affairs induced him to decline. Had his taste and bodily strength allowed him, there is no reason to doubt that he might have wielded a much wider influence, and added in numerous directions to his high reputation. All the offices which he was prevailed upon to accept were discharged with characteristic energy and discretion.

In 1832, he was appointed President of the Boston Branch of the Bank of the United States. The conflict between the Government and that institution, which occurred soon after his election, and the financial crisis which ensued, rendered his administration peculiarly difficult, and called for the exercise of the utmost prudence and firmness. He insisted — to use his own language — that his own branch should be allowed to conduct its affairs on "fair and independent princi-

ples;" and, by the aid of an able Board of Directors, he succeeded in so managing its concerns, that, while the closing of the parent bank and most of its subordinates was attended with much loss, the books of the Boston office showed a favorable balance.

Mr. Appleton was connected with the management of the Massachusetts General Hospital during a quarter of a century, and was president of that institution at the time of his death. He always manifested a lively interest in its benevolent purposes; and the distinguished success which has attended its operations is attributed by its trustees in no small measure to his prudent counsels and well-directed munificence. According to their grateful testimony, "the fund which he established for the assistance of the curable insane has abounded in rich fruits; and the buildings bearing his name at Somerville, which were erected at his suggestion and chiefly by his bounty, are honorable monuments both of his sagacity and his benevolence." The character and value of the endowment to which the trustees refer, as well as the motives of Mr. Appleton in making it, are well exhibited in the subjoined correspondence: —

"Boston, Jan. 8, 1862.

"My dear Sir, — I send herewith my check for ten thousand dollars, to be added to the fund I commenced many years since, to enable such patients, as would otherwise be compelled to leave imperfectly cured, to remain until a thorough re-establishment of health might be effected.

"The history of the origin of this fund may be interesting. Many years ago, in my early connection with the asylum and with my excellent friend Dr. Bell, my notice was attracted to a mother and daughter, the latter a patient

much improved in health by her treatment while an inmate of the establishment. The mother insisted on her removal; while the doctor expressed the opinion, that, if she left at that time, she would be obliged to return in a few weeks, while the same length of time spent at the asylum would thoroughly cure her. The mother insisted, however, on the ground that her own means and those of her friends were exhausted. She was pecuniarily unable to continue her child's residence at the hospital, however desirable, and even necessary, it might be. The daughter was a delicate person of some eighteen or twenty years of age, reluctantly, I thought, yielding to the necessity her mother had explained. I asked her if she would like to remain. She said 'she wished to get well, but could not stay.' I offered to pay the necessary expense. A mingled expression appeared to me to overspread her features. Her eye had a softened look of female delicacy. The desire to leave contended with the feeling of duty to remain; while, over all, the fearful look of wavering reason gradually prevailed. She remained at the asylum; and, after a few weeks, returned, entirely cured, to her friends; and, so far as I have been informed, was restored to usefulness in her humble vocation. For several years, I supplied the means to meet such cases as they occurred; until my success in business enabled me to commence the permanent fund, to which this will be added, and which, with the sum given by myself and the other executors of Mr. Samuel Appleton, now amounts to thirty thousand dollars.

"I have watched with interest and pleasure the benefit resulting from this appropriation. Would that others would see it as I have done! Their sympathies would be excited, and they would thank God for the ability and opportunity to join in so good a work.

"With much respect, yours sincerely,

"Wm. Appleton.

"Hon. H. B. Rogers, Chairman Board of Trustees
Mass. General Hospital."

"Boston, 11th January, 1862.

"Hon. William Appleton.

"Dear Sir, — In the absence of Mr. Rogers, your interesting communication of the 8th instant, enclosing a check for ten thousand dollars, was presented to the trustees of the Hospital, yesterday afternoon, by Mr. Stevenson; and the duty, and, I will add, the pleasure, of acknowledging it, was assigned to me.

"The trustees gratefully accept this renewed expression of your benevolent interest. They have long been impressed by the blessings you have heretofore conferred upon the inmates of the asylum.

"The Appleton Buildings, erected chiefly by your contribution of twenty thousand dollars, afford all the comforts and luxuries of a refined home, greatly increasing the salutary influences of the institution; while the Appleton Fund *for the support of interesting indigent patients*, now enlarged to thirty thousand dollars, twenty thousand of which you have contributed, constantly reminds the trustees of your wisdom and beneficence.

"The income from this fund is the source from which many persons, whose circumstances were as interesting and as pathetic as that to which you refer as suggesting this endowment, have been supported through, perhaps, the deepest of all afflictions, and restored, wholly or in part, to health, usefulness, and peace. Others are now receiving the benefits of this fund, with the hopeful prospect of similar results. For those yet to be called upon to bear this discipline, this fund will be most faithfully cherished.

"The trustees are gratified to observe that you 'have watched with interest and pleasure the benefit resulting from this appropriation:' and they most cordially sympathize with you in the earnest wish, 'that others would see it as you have done. Their sympathies would be excited, and they would thank God for the ability and opportunity to join in so good a work.'

"You, sir, have the happiness which arises from the will and power to relieve the afflicted; but there are many made both happy and grateful by the blessings conferred on them by your noble contributions.

"With great regard, I remain, sir, faithfully yours,

"W. S. Bullard."

Mr. Appleton was chosen a member of the Massachusetts Historical Society, not for any literary merit or any peculiar interest in historical studies, but as a representative of a class of men, whose eminent practical talents and achievements, exemplary integrity, influential position, and valuable services to civilization, this Society has always recognized. The names of those who, by augmenting the materials of a nation's prosperity, have helped to furnish and illustrate its history, are justly entitled to be enrolled with theirs who study and record it. Especially should there be a place reserved for such men in an association like this, when, in addition to the claims just referred to, they have contributed of their wealth and influence to the support of literature and art, and earned the honorable title of patrons of good learning.

In November, 1850, Mr. Appleton was elected a representative to Congress from the Suffolk District. He had accepted the nomination with diffidence and reluctance. It had been pressed upon him by his friends, whose estimate of his capabilities for the office was far higher than his own. He frankly expressed to them his fears that he might disappoint their expectations; and he privately recorded his anxiety as to the effect which the cares of public life, and the political

and social influences of Washington, might have upon his religious character. "I dread the thought of being drawn towards the world, and further from Him to whom my sole confidence and my service are due. I doubt myself. I put all my trust in God, and pray that he will direct and strengthen me."

The event, however, proved the wisdom of those who had selected him for this important trust. He discharged its duties, during the Congress of 1851–2 and that of 1853–4, with eminent ability. Though his voice was never heard in debate, yet he exerted a weighty influence, and most successfully promoted the interests of those whom he represented. His opinion upon the subjects with which he was conversant was always regarded with deference, and not unfrequently taken as authority. Members of both the great political parties asked his advice, assured of obtaining an independent and candid judgment; and even the higher officers of the Government sometimes availed themselves of his prudent counsels. The Committee of Ways and Means, on which he served during the whole period of his Congressional life, were greatly indebted to his experience and wisdom, and often expressed their high appreciation of his services. No man in Washington occupied a higher social position, received and extended a more generous hospitality, served his constituents more usefully or more honorably, or enjoyed a more unsullied reputation.

Mr. Appleton was for the third time chosen to Congress in 1861; having again, in deference to the urgent solicitations of his personal and political friends, waived his general unwillingness to engage in public life,

now increased by the precarious state of his health. He was just entering his seventy-fourth year. His feeble constitution, which had held out so long and endured so many labors only through the force and animation of his indomitable will and by means of a strict and prudent regimen, was evidently beginning to give way. He contemplated with deep solicitude the gloomy aspect of our national affairs, and looked forward with sad foreboding to the awful crisis which was impending. But he would not shrink from the post of duty to which the suffrages of his fellow-citizens had called him in this time of trial. Whatever strength remained to him; whatever wisdom or moderation or conciliatory influence he might be able to contribute, — he would not withhold from the service of his country.

"If I live," he writes, "and have sufficient strength, I shall meet my responsibilities; but I feel them deeply, as I am old and weak. I am admonished that my days are numbered, and few. When I view the present state of this country, — but yesterday, enjoying greater privileges than any nation of ancient or modern times; to-day, apparently about to abandon those institutions that have raised us, since I was born, from a poor and feeble people of three or four millions to a vigorous and mighty nation of thirty, and to an equal rank with the leading powers of the world; insanely about to throw ourselves into chaos, without any real cause, — I am dismayed. We must feel that God is displeased with us; that our sins are such as to bring upon us sudden and severe chastisement. We say, continually, 'God rules the world:' I see nothing now that can save us from what would appear to be the greatest calamity that could befall our country, except His power to overrule the wills and passions of selfish and wicked men. God preserve us!"

He went to Washington with a heavy heart, but with a high and resolute purpose. His intimate acquaintance with some of the best families of the South, whose kind attentions had been lavished upon him during his frequent visits as an invalid to Charleston, and whose hospitality he had often reciprocated, had established towards them a strong attachment and sympathy. But no personal friendship could draw him aside from his supreme obligation to his country. The oath by which he had bound himself to defend the Constitution had been taken with his whole heart. He loved the Union with intense affection. Every sectional prejudice, whether of a Northern or a Southern leaning, his loyal mind had always rejected. He not only opposed, with all his ability, every measure and every word which tended to division, but sought to allay even the spirit of alienation. So long as there was any hope left of avoiding an open rupture, he neglected no legitimate means within his reach to prevent it. But, when the crisis came, he did not hesitate as to his duty. The very same principles of pure patriotism which had prompted his endeavors to preserve the Union from being severed, now moved him as heartily to sustain the Government, as the only means of restoring it; or, if a restoration should be impossible, as the only barrier and safeguard against utter national ruin. Having adopted this wise policy, he acted upon it with his accustomed energy and consistency. He gave his voice and his money for the vigorous prosecution of the war. Repugnant as it was to his feelings as a patriot and a humane and Christian man, he felt that it had been forced upon the Government; that it had

become a dire necessity; and that to carry it on energetically to a successful issue was not only the dictate of patriotism, but even of humanity.

Mr. Appleton remained in Washington during the summer session of 1861, till the close of July, when his failing health compelled him to return to Boston. He hoped, at first, that, after a temporary rest, he might be able to resume his seat in Congress; but the advice of his physicians and his rapidly increasing debility compelled him to resign it. The last days of his public service were spent in diligent attendance upon the meetings of the Committee of Ways and Means, who then had under consideration several measures particularly affecting the mercantile interests of his constituents. His own simple record of these closing labors will give the best impression, not only of their value, but of their extraordinary persistency: —

"July 14. — Went this morning to Mr. Stevens, Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, to obtain his consent to telegraph to Boston and New York that there was no cause of alarm as to their goods in the bonded warehouse. While at the telegraph-office, received a telegram announcing the death of my long-loved friend, Mr. Nathan Appleton. I had said that I would return to Boston on his decease; but I was told, and believed, that I could not do so without neglecting urgent duties in this place. My duty was evidently here. A bill for raising revenue was before the Committee of Ways and Means. No other merchant was on the committee. I remained, and secured for our shipping-merchants much advantage as to the time when the duties should take effect, and on the warehouse-goods. I feared, if I left, the bill might be changed in the House or Senate. I will not speak of the virtues of my dear departed friend. His character will be fully portrayed by others. Great purity of heart he possessed.

"July 15. — At Committee and House till five o'clock.

"16. — Went to Committee at ten o'clock, and then to the House.

"17. — Very busy with tariff-bill. Went to the Treasurer in relation to his project as to wines and spirits. He said they had but imperfect information. Quite satisfied with the view of the Committee whom I represented.

"18. — Bill for increasing revenue passed the House. Went to see the Massachusetts troops.

"19. — At Committee and House. Much excitement as to our troops in Virginia.

"20. — House not in session. At Committee."

He was confined to his room by sickness on the 21st, 22d, and 23d.

"July 24. — Went to the House and Committee.

"25. — Went to Committee.

"26. — Went to Committee.

"27. — Quite ill. My physician told me to go home to the North as soon as possible.

"28. — Not well. Low spirits.

"29. — Went to Committee. Called on the President.

"30. — Quite feeble. Went to the Committee-room. Found all present. Stated to them that I found that my health was failing; and asked them, if, in their opinion, there remained any thing to be done for my constituents that would justify my remaining in Washington at the risk of my life. Mr. Stevens was kind enough to compliment me for my usefulness, and said that the work was done: as to the tariff, a Committee of Conference would do all that was now required; that he believed our bill would be sustained. They all took me by the hand, and said they hoped I would return again in December, &c., &c. I was most kindly treated and taken leave of by the Committee; in fact, by all."

Such was the enviable close of his Congressional career and his public life. That little scene in the Committee-room, which he has so briefly and modestly described, but which others who witnessed it have portrayed in warmer colors, and that more general and miscellaneous leave-taking to which he refers as having been, without exception, kindly, are beautiful and touching tributes alike to the value of his services, the purity of his character, the weight of his influence, and the warmth of his heart. None surely but a most unselfish and upright man could have retired thus from the halls of Congress, and all the associations of the Capitol, without one bitter reflection, one pang of wounded vanity or disappointed ambition, one regret for words spoken, deeds done or duties neglected, one remembrance of injuries inflicted or suffered; with no other feeling in his heart than a tender sense of the universal kindness of others, and a sweet consciousness of his own unqualified good-will towards all.

He came back to Boston exhausted and enfeebled, not to prepare for death, — for that reasonable and religious duty had not been deferred to the uncertainties of the last hour, — but calmly to await it. For many years, admonished by his delicate health, it had been his endeavor "to set his house in order," and to keep it so. At several periods, he had supposed the end to be at hand; and, at each of them, he had contemplated the event with the faith and composure of a Christian. His worldly affairs were always so honestly managed, and so prudently arranged, as to give him no anxiety in anticipation of his departure. His feelings towards his fel-

low-men, if in any instance disturbed during the day, were habitually pacified before the night. The only point in which he felt the need of a more perfect preparation was in regard to his spiritual aptitude for heaven; and for the full remedy of this insufficiency, inseparable from human imperfection, he earnestly besought the grace of God, and humbly relied upon the merits and intercession of the Redeemer.

He came home to await death; but not in supineness and seclusion. While he had strength to bear his armor, it was against his nature and his principle to lay it down. So long as his faculties were undimmed, he would keep them occupied. Until he must take his final leave of his friends, he felt it to be right to serve and enjoy them.

Day by day, his bodily strength failed; but there was no faltering of his spirit, and no decay of his heart. He kept at work, bravely and cheerfully, till God's time came for his labors to cease. Then, without reluctance, he dropped the instruments of his earthly service, meekly laid himself down, folded his hands upon his breast, fixed all his thoughts upon the crucified Saviour, and fell asleep.*

The foregoing cursory sketch of Mr. Appleton's life has brought into view some of his peculiar traits; but as they have come into notice with no regard to arrangement, and only in connection with the incidents which suggested them, they have necessarily been presented in a partial and fragmentary manner. Justice to his own

* He died at Longwood, near Boston, Saturday, Feb. 15, 1862.

distinguished merits, as well as fidelity to the duty which this Society has laid upon us, require not only a more detailed recognition of his prominent features, but an attempt to group them, as far as possible, into a life-like image of the man.

All his qualities were so positive, and so honestly and independently exercised, that no one who was acquainted with his character would find any difficulty in analyzing it. Indeed, to a degree which is seldom equalled, his character had moulded and stamped itself upon his form. His whole person was singularly expressive; it is not extravagant to say, *impressive*. His capacious forehead betokened a powerful and thoughtful intellect, quick to apprehend, sagacious to analyze, comprehensive to combine, and weighty to influence. His large and fine eye, so bright and keen in pursuit and scrutiny, so deep and often sad in repose, so soft and pleasant in friendly conversation and sympathetic moods, was but a truthful index to his thoughts, — now so intense and penetrating, then so serious and self-arraigning, and again so genial and kind. His pale face, sunken cheeks, and emaciated form, in connection with his quick motions, his impatient gestures, his decided and sometimes abrupt manner, and his concise, conclusive style, gave evidence of that fervid spirit and imperious will which tasked the delicate organization with which they were so unequally allied. With no stateliness nor peculiar grace, he was invested with an air of dignity and refinement which can only emanate from a pure and noble soul. His presence was felt in every company as none can be but that of the most individual and potential characters. His influence

was such as belongs only to those who are born to control. He bore the genuine credentials of a royal nature. He had the instinct and the look of authority, — the eye and the lip of command; and, better than all, he wore the imperial signet of truth, and the princely robe of integrity. In any station, he would have made his mark; in any path, he would have risen to distinction. No measure of success could relax his energy, and no amount of difficulty discourage his exertions. Facilities and obstacles were alike incentives. Whatever sagacity could devise, courage adventure, or persistency achieve, he was sure to accomplish.

And yet, with all his independence, his quickness of temper, his pertinacity of will, and his peremptoriness of manner, there were combined tender affections, generous sympathies, liberal sentiments, and a kind and forgiving disposition. Though habitually irritable, he was never vindictive. No residue of resentment outlasted the hasty utterance. If his tongue had inadvertently inflicted a sudden pang, his hand was instantly ready to relieve it. In the long record of forty years of his life, which is before us, with all its allusions to the numerous individuals with whom he had been brought into contact in social, commercial, and political intercourse, there is positively not one uncharitable word, nor even so much as a single unkind insinuation. If there are any reproaches, they are visited upon himself. He never disparaged others, but strove to keep his own heart humble. While earnestly aspiring after the highest honors and rewards which nature or circumstances led him to pursue, he never sought to raise himself by pull-

ing another down. He kept his heart above mean rivalries, and he spurned the tricks of ambition. He would deserve honor, not beg for it; and secure success by merit, not by intrigue. All the prizes which he obtained, of wealth, of mercantile reputation, of social rank, of personal respect and public distinction, he lawfully pursued and fairly won. Nor, when they were attained, were they selfishly enjoyed or arrogantly paraded; but his heart expanded with his gains, and his private and public services were multiplied with his honors.

But, while diligently pursuing, and obtaining, these earthly treasures, his heart was never turned away from the heavenly. While reaping in ample measure the golden harvest of his temporal labors, he never ceased to "have respect unto the recompense of reward." The best part of his life, and the most praiseworthy of his attainments, were only partially seen of men. They recognized, indeed, the purity of his conversation and conduct, his scrupulous fidelity to his engagements, his benevolence, his reverence for things sacred, his punctual observance of the forms of religion, and some of the more costly offerings which he dedicated to Christ and the Church; but there were holier and lovelier things, of which all those conveyed but a partial idea, hidden behind the veil. Having lifted that veil, so far as his diary enables us, with a reverent hand, we have caught glimpses of a secret life, which casts all those outward works and virtues into the shade. We have seen the manifestations of a strong religious faith, a childlike submission, a lively gratitude, a deep humility, a daily hunger and thirst after righteousness, a constant warfare

with the flesh and the world, — traces of a profound Christian experience, a continual growth in grace, and a gradual ripening of the character for heaven.

We have no misgivings in holding up such a life before the young men of New England, as worthy of honor and emulation. In the lengthening roll of those princely merchants whose unsullied integrity has established the commercial credit of Boston, whose munificence has endowed its institutions of learning, charity, and religion, and whose honorable lives have been among its noblest ornaments, the name of William Appleton, in view of the various qualities which exalt his vocation, illustrate the benefactor, approve the Christian, and dignify the man, though it may not be entitled to pre-eminence, deserves no second place.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

The following letter from one whose intimate acquaintance with Mr. Appleton, as well as his practised and graceful pen, give authority to his words, is a memoir in itself: —

"Philadelphia, January, 1863.

"Rev. and dear Sir,

"Your request, that I should furnish you with a few reminiscences of my dear friend William Appleton, has lain too long unanswered. You have about you those who have seen him more intimately in his walk as a Christian, a citizen, and a man of business; and I can hardly hope to add any thing to their contributions. Yet I gladly pay a slight tribute to one whom I had strong reason to love and honor, and who may well be held up before the young as an example.

"I first knew Mr. Appleton in the early part of the year 1826; and, from that time to the day of his death, I saw him as frequently and familiarly as often happens to men engaged in different pursuits, and living most of the time remote from each other. During five years, at the beginning of our acquaintance, it was my privilege to minister to him in holy things, and I was then his near neighbor and friend. The intimacy then formed has continued with unabated cordiality, and I have at times been an inmate of his family for several weeks. As I stood, in February last, over his cold remains, my memory reproduced most vividly the first occasion on which I saw him, and the impression which the interview of a few hours made upon me. His emaciated figure and pale face, his ample fore-

head, and eye beaming with kindness, his quick and decided motions, and his spare and somewhat hesitating speech, all told of broken health, of an active and shrewd mind, of a strong but mastered will, of a genial and most benevolent heart. It seemed evident, at once, that he was a man of action rather than of words; and one who, without claiming or even desiring it, would naturally take a large share in the direction of any affairs with which he had more immediate connection. Such he has appeared to me ever since. Of his course in business, I knew little. When he came to his home, the schemes and cares of the counting-room seemed to be laid aside. He gave himself to his guests, his friends, and, above all, to his family. Whatever would promote their happiness or welfare, formed, unconsciously, his great care. All neighborly acts, such as most men and especially men of feeble health and in his situation of life, would scarcely have thought of, were his delight. They were performed so constantly, and with such apparent ease and self-forgetfulness, that you hardly remembered that they were favors. He enjoyed conversation greatly, though not taking a large share in it. His range of information was not great; but his judgment always struck me as singularly correct. There was, on practical questions, a quickness and precision which seemed intuitive, and usually a great absence of prejudice and passion. At one time, I had frequent occasion to consult him; and, though it was on subjects foreign from his accustomed cares and pursuits, his opinions were eminently judicious.

"You ask me more particularly in regard to his religious history. I am sorry that on this point I cannot give information that is very full or definite. When I was his pastor, he did not profess to be a decidedly Christian man. He had been faithfully instructed by godly parents; and for his mother, who survived, he cherished a profound reverence. But the cares of the world and the blandishments of society had insensibly shaken his faith in some of those principles of Christianity which formed the stay and solace of his later years, as they had been the staple of his earlier teachings. His mind, when I first knew

him, seemed to yearn for the support and satisfaction of a clearer and stronger faith in spiritual realities, but to recoil from the effort and the sacrifices by which it was to be won. The charms of things seen were in evident conflict in his mind with things unseen; and his intense devotion to business, combined with his deference for those about him, gave advantage to the former. At times, he rebelled against exhibitions of what I regarded as truth; and I recollect, with deep interest, long conversations which on such occasions I have had with him. His acuteness and strong sense were sometimes more than a match for my crude thoughts; and I have always felt that the scrutiny to which his active mind subjected my preaching at this time, when I was just beginning my ministry, was no small service to me. His questionings were always kind and respectful: they evinced a mind searching for truth; though it was sometimes quite obvious that it was more for the satisfaction of a speculative curiosity than for the instruction and edification of his moral nature. At others, his whole soul seemed to brood over the great problems of our higher life; and I thought, that, during the few years he was my parishioner, there was evident progress in the depth and active power of his religious convictions. I left Boston in the year 1831. Not long after, severe domestic bereavements, the faithful preaching of my successor, and his deep sense of responsibility as a parent, all contributed to fix his purpose for life; and he became an avowed follower of his Lord.

"I ought to add, that he was, from the beginning, a most liberal supporter of the church (St. Paul's) which he attended. When I took charge of it, it was burdened with heavy debts. Though at that time he kept no carriage, and indulged in few unnecessary expenses, he boldly assumed the principal burden; and it was mainly through his generosity and decision that the parish was carried through a very serious crisis. His hand was, at that time, always open to any good call that was made upon his sympathy or public spirit. I can bear most grateful testimony to the considerate and delicate kindness with which he always treated his pastor and his pastor's family.

"During all the years that I knew him, he exhibited an admirable self-mastery. A great dyspeptic, with a morbid appetite, he was inexorable to all the temptations of the table. With intense native energy, and great fondness for the hazards and successes of trade, he seemed, on system, to restrain himself from becoming entirely engrossed and enslaved. A father, sorely afflicted and bereaved, he never betrayed impatience. When, not many years since, one of the heaviest domestic calamities seemed impending, and after he had received one crushing blow after another, he said to me at an accidental meeting, 'This seems the knell of my earthly hopes. The past has been bitter; this exceeds in bitterness. But, much as I have suffered, I feel that I have needed it all; and, in my prayers to my heavenly Father, my first request is, "Thy will be done." If more chastening be necessary to subdue my pride, to humble my self-will, to cure my devotion to things earthly, let it come. Him who hath borne such agonies for my sake, and who loves me with a love passing all human affection, I can trust. Not my will, but his.'

"It is said, that, as he grew old, he did not escape entirely that which has been called 'the vice of old age.' It has also been intimated, that his religious sensibilities had been somewhat dulled in his later years by contact with political life. Of this I cannot speak with any confidence, not having met him as frequently or as intimately as before. I can only say, that, so far as I did see or know him through all his advancing age, he seemed to me an earnest, godly man; fighting — as who of us does not? — but fighting valiantly and prayerfully against 'the world, the flesh, and the devil.'

"It is now the first day of a new year (1863). Thirty-seven years have nearly passed since first I saw him. During all that time, William Appleton has seemed to me a rare man. As a neighbor and friend, as a citizen and merchant, as a father and husband, he was one of Nature's noblemen. As he advanced in life, he was enriched and endowed by grace, and became a fountain of temporal and spiritual blessings to many, near and far off. I have seen him (how often!) at his board,

surrounded by his large and lovely family, radiant with happiness, giving and receiving nothing but joy. I have seen his children growing up, and then cut down, one after another, when surrounded by the brightest and gayest hopes. His admirable wife — so full of all amenities, and so abundant in works of kindness — I have seen succumbing under the weight of one domestic sorrow after another, and finally resigning herself to death. Himself I have seen, — left alone in the house that for more than forty-five years had been his cherished home, broken in health, burdened with the weight of more than threescore years and ten. I have heard of him, with mind unclouded and spirit serene, making all his preparations deliberately for his last hour, and entering the dark valley with humble but unfaltering trust in his Almighty Redeemer. Could more have been wished for him? 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. Even so, saith the Spirit; for they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.'

"I am, dear sir, yours very truly,

"ALONZO POTTER.

"Rev. CHANDLER ROBBINS, D.D."

PUBLIC MEETING OF THE CITIZENS OF BOSTON, IN RESPECT TO THE MEMORY OF WILLIAM APPLETON.

A very full meeting of our citizens was held in the Merchants' Exchange Reading Room, at half-past ten o'clock, Tuesday, Feb. 18, to testify their respect for the late Hon. William Appleton. The meeting was called to order by Israel Whitney, Esq. He offered the following list of officers, which was accepted: President, Edward S. Tobey; Vice-Presidents, James M. Beebe, John L. Gardner; Secretaries, William Perkins, James Lawrence.

The following report is taken from the "Daily Advertiser:" —

Mr. TOBEY, on taking the chair, addressed the meeting as follows: —

FELLOW-CITIZENS, — We are assembled on this solemn occasion to manifest in some appropriate manner our respect for the character of our esteemed and deeply-lamented fellow-citizen, the Hon. William Appleton, who died at Longwood on Saturday morning last.

This mournful event has brought together statesmen, merchants, and citizens of various professions, to mingle their sentiments of regard, so justly due to the worthy character and eminent distinction of our deceased friend and associate. His long and successful career as one of the most prominent merchants of this city has given to his name a world-wide reputation as a representative of rare commercial ability, sound judgment, and honorable enterprise. Amidst all the vicissitudes of the mercantile profession, and the severe ordeal to which all engaged in it must unavoidably be subjected, none have sustained a reputation more exempt from dishonor, or from the misapprehensions incident to the various and complex relations of an extensive and long business experience, than has Mr. Appleton. It is therefore eminently fit that we should pause in the hurried and pressing duties of the hour, and turn aside to pay a spontaneous tribute of respect to the memory and worth of an honorable merchant, a conservative patriot, an exemplary citizen, who, during a long life of active industry and practical usefulness, has contributed largely to the prosperity and moral and religious welfare of this city and of this country. With his mental powers undimmed almost to the last hours of life, we may say, in the expressive language of another, "He seems to us *now*, as in truth he *is*, not extinguished, or ceasing to be, but only withdrawn; as the clear sun goes down at his setting, not darkened, but only no longer seen."

But I am admonished by the presence of his distinguished contemporaries and friends, who have been permitted to enjoy a more intimate social intercourse, that it is not for me to present at length the merits of either the private or public character of our deceased friend. That duty appropriately devolves on others. I shall, however, regard it a privilege, both individually and in behalf of the mercantile body I represent, to concur in any measures that may be

proposed in testimony to his eminent worth, or in remembrance of his many virtues.

Charles G. Loring, Esq., offered a series of resolutions, with the following remarks: —

Mr. Chairman, — The distinguished citizen, in reference to whose decease this meeting has been called, having passed from this scene of earthly labor, in which he filled a sphere of pre-eminent usefulness and influence, it becomes those who shared in his toils, and enjoyed and suffered with him in the alternations of mercantile prosperity and adversity; who reaped the benefits of his ability, wisdom, and experience, in the management of private and public affairs, and were aided by his efficient intervention and counsels, — to pause, though it be for a moment only, to pay a passing tribute of respect and grateful recollection to his memory; and to lay, however transitorily, to heart the lesson of mortality which the departure of one of such wealth, position, wide-spread influence, religious and moral principle, and means of social and domestic enjoyment, — combining all that seems to make earthly life desirable, — so eminently illustrates.

Mr. Appleton was, by nature, education, and habit, eminently qualified for the vocation in which he passed his life; and in which he had few, if any, superiors in ability, reputation, or success. Combining remarkable powers of perception and analysis, his apprehension of the subject presented, in all its most important relations, was so instantaneous as to seem intuition rather than judgment. His decision often preceded half the statements of the case; so clear and accurate was his mental eye in discerning the prominent points upon which it should turn, without reference to the surroundings which distracted or absorbed the attention of less comprehensive or quick-sighted minds. Nor was his resolution less prompt and effective than the rapidity of his apprehension. Having once ascertained the material relations of the matter in hand, and satisfied himself of their reality, his decision was immediate; and action followed, with no faltering step, on judgment.

In reputation for foresight, sagacity, and comprehension in financial and mercantile affairs, he held a position to which few in our community have ever attained; and exerted a corresponding influence, not confined to the city or state in which he lived, but which extended to the great metropolis of the country, and at three different

periods illuminated and influenced the councils of the nation. Of this power, he fully enjoyed the consciousness; but never perverted it to the advancement of his own interest, in contravention of his duty to others or to the public.

His wider range of information, superior foresight, and peculiar faculty of comprehensive combination, often gave to him great advantage in mercantile negotiation, but never tempted him to dishonesty or disingenuousness; and cases not infrequently occurred, where consciousness of the effect of such superiority, in favorable results to himself, led to a subsequent modification of the contract, or other indemnity, to the other party. He was a merchant in the highest sense of the word; acting upon the true principles of his occupation, scrupulous in fulfilling fairly his part of the agreement, and exacting an equally strict performance of it on the other: leaving the consequences, if not conformable to his subsequent sense of equity, or if appealing to his generosity, to be adjusted under their proper influences. Mr. Appleton was not a man of comprehensive attainment beyond the limits of his vocation: he had, however, the capacity to enjoy the science and learning of others in public exhibitions of them or in the social circle; and few knew better how to distinguish between reality and pretension, or to appreciate the sources of those, who, in other departments, evinced the superiority of which he was conscious in his own.

In private life, the deceased illustrated the guidance and control of combined religious principle and emotion. Fervent in faith, and desirous to extend its benign influences, he contributed very largely to religious institutions and purposes; and was, more than most men equally devoted to affairs, accustomed to religious reading and conversation. As a husband, father, relative, and friend, his kindness and generosity were without stint or limit; while he evinced in numberless ways, often unknown to the recipients of his bounty, his full apprehension of the Christian answer to the question, "Who is my neighbor?" Although often abrupt, and sometimes having the appearance of unkindness (a manner the probable result of years of suffering under a form of disease vitally affecting the nervous system), those who knew him most intimately, and were most conversant with his daily walks, bear testimony that he had beneath a heart full of tenderness to his friends, and all whose welfare or happiness he could promote; that he loved to visit the widow and the fatherless, and cheer, by his friendly attentions and kind offices, those who had seen

better days; and that their humble dwellings were not infrequently the scenes of his soothing sympathy and considerate aid. Nor were the more conspicuous objects of public charity forgotten or disregarded, as his repeated and liberal contributions to the McLean Asylum and other institutions bear witness.

In the discharge of his duties at Washington, he was eminently faithful and attentive; and though not participating much, if ever, in debate, he was most assiduous in the more arduous and important duties of the committee-room, and exercised a very great and widely spread influence upon public men and measures. This influence, heightened by a genial and liberal hospitality and the profound respect entertained for his abilities and fidelity, gathered for him troops of friends in all parts of the country.

And when his long, successful, and most useful life was drawing to a close, conscious of the near approach of his last hour on earth, no fear or painful apprehension obscured his mind, or weakened his faith that the dark valley into which he had entered terminated at the gate of a higher and holier state of being. In view, sir, of the character and services of such a fellow-citizen, for whose memory we are here assembled to pay the last tribute of respect, I offer the following resolutions for the consideration of the meeting: —

RESOLUTIONS.

Resolved, That, in the decease of Hon. William Appleton, the mercantile community has sustained the loss of one of its most eminent, useful, and influential members, whose example eminently illustrated the effects of faithful devotion to the principles of industry and fidelity which characterize the true merchant, and which has greatly contributed to the confidence and respect with which that profession is regarded throughout the city and the Commonwealth.

Resolved, That his services in the national councils, and the wisdom, kindness, and efficiency with which he aided others and the public in exigencies of commercial embarrassment and in the administration of the financial affairs of the community, should ever be held in honored and grateful remembrance.

Resolved, That, in his departure, the public has lost a distinguished benefactor, the poor a kind-hearted almoner of the wealth committed to his trust, and religion and charity a beneficent friend.

Resolved, That we sympathize with the family and relatives of the deceased in the death of one so justly and extensively beloved

and revered, and who so eminently exhibited the virtues and graces of social and domestic life and the influences of Christian benevolence; and that the Chairman be requested to transmit to them a copy of these resolutions, in token of our respect for his memory, and of our condolence in their bereavement.

Samuel T. Dana, Esq., moved the following resolution, which was adopted: —

Resolved, That the proceedings of this meeting be published in the daily papers, and that the secretary be requested to transmit a copy of the same to the family of the deceased; and that, when this meeting shall adjourn, it adjourn to meet at St. Paul's Church, at twelve o'clock this noon, to attend the obsequies of the deceased.

The resolutions were seconded by Hon. Robert C. Winthrop, who spoke as follows: —

In the absence of Mr. Everett, who, to his own regret not less than to the regret of us all, is prevented by severe indisposition from being with us this morning, I am here, my friends, at short notice, and with less preparation than I could have desired for such a service, to second the resolutions which have just been read, and to pay my humble tribute to the memory of the excellent man whose loss will be so deeply felt in this community.

I shall attempt no elaborate eulogy. He does not need it. He would not have desired it. He was not a man of many words himself; and, in view of what has already been so well said by others, I may be pardoned for summing up his character, his services, and his claims upon our respect and gratitude, with something of the same directness and brevity which would have characterized any similar tribute of his own.

Our lamented friend was a person of many marked peculiarities, both physical and mental. No one, I think, could have observed his slender form and sunken cheek, at any time within a half-century past, without wondering how he had escaped an early doom; or certainly without supposing that he must always have been destined to lead the life of an invalid. He has told me himself, that, more than forty years ago, he embarked from one of yonder wharves, on a voyage to the Mediterranean, without an expectation, on the part of his friends, that he could live to return home. But within that

seemingly feeble frame there was an indomitable will; there was a cheerful and courageous spirit, and a mind of extraordinary activity.

Descended from an ancient and honored stock, whose memorials are abundant in Old England and in New England, the son of a worthy Massachusetts clergyman, he enjoyed, in his boyhood, the unspeakable advantages of a good school education and of a religious home. But his tastes were not for literary pursuits; and he never entered on a collegiate course. Nature had plainly endowed him with qualities peculiarly adapted to a practical, business life; and he was not slow in finding it out.

He was a man of quick and keen perception; reaching results by a sort of intuition or instinct, which others would have attained by long processes of thought and study. He was a man of prompt and firm decision; relying upon his own impressions; obedient to his own convictions; not troubled with many doubts on any subject, and rarely leaning upon the counsels of others. He was a man of marvellous despatch and energy in the execution of his plans and purposes; impatient of delay in accomplishing whatever his judgment had once approved as right and best under the circumstances before him. Whatever his hand found to do, he literally "did it with all his might." Entering early upon mercantile pursuits with these natural adaptations, and refusing to yield to a condition of physical infirmity which would have forced so many others into retirement before they had reached their maturity, he persevered in his chosen calling, with unabated activity, until within a short period of his death at the advanced age of seventy-five years. From first to last, the most signal success attended him in almost all his business transactions. He amassed a great fortune; and he was by no means indifferent to its increase. He never disguised the satisfaction with which he saw it grow and roll up under his careful and skilful management.

But happily for him, and happily for the community in which he lived, his acknowledged love of wealth, and his unsurpassed sagacity in acquiring it, not only never obtained the mastery over his higher and nobler attributes, but rather served to secure a wider scope for their development and exercise. He ever cherished and cultivated — not out of any mere generous impulse, and still less out of any unworthy ostentation, but as a matter of Christian principle and conscientious obligation — a spirit and a habit of the largest liberality and beneficence. It seemed as if his capacity for acquisition could only be surpassed by his readiness to give and his gladness to distribute.

The public institutions which have been the subject of his bounty are known to us all. We may see them on all sides of us. The noble structures which he erected, the excellent establishments which he endowed, are his best monuments; and the blessings of those to whose temporal or spiritual comfort they were consecrated are his just and all-sufficient eulogy. Yet, if I mistake not, these public endowments would make up but a small part of the history of his life-long beneficence. The private charities which he has dispensed, year by year and day by day, when his left hand was hardly permitted to know what his right hand was doing, — could they ever be recounted in full, would occupy even a larger and a brighter page; and, if they are never recounted on earth, we know they will have secured for themselves, and will have secured for him, a record on high, compared with which all earthly celebrity is but as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

Mr. President, the character and career of our departed friend may be regarded in many different aspects. As a merchant of eminent sagacity and unsullied integrity; as a public man, who has rendered valuable and patriotic services to his country, both in his early relations to the Bank of the United States and in his more recent connection with the National Legislature; as a fellow-citizen and friend, faithful to every private duty, given to hospitality and good neighborhood, and never withholding his time, his counsel, or his purse, from the exigencies of others; as a benevolent and munificent patron of so many of our noble institutions of religion, education, and philanthropy; in all these respects alike, he has been distinguished among the most distinguished; and, in some of them, he has hardly left his peer.

Yet I hazard nothing in saying, that he would himself have desired to be remembered, above all, as a humble, sincere, devoted Christian; not bigoted, not boastful; of the largest toleration and most comprehensive charity, rather; but adhering, with open and unswerving allegiance, to the precepts and doctrines of the gospel as he understood them, and to that faith in Christ, which he told me, as he pressed my hand for the last time a few days since, was the sure and steadfast anchor of his soul. That faith had sustained him in life, under a succession of domestic afflictions such as had fallen to the lot of few other men; and it could not, and did not, fail him in the hour of death. That was the very hour of its richest consolations and its most assured triumphs.

Sir, the merchants of Boston, and not the merchants only, but our whole community, may well be saddened as one after another of our most eminent and excellent men are taken away from us. Their loss would have been felt deeply at any time; but we miss them especially in this hour of our country's agony, when we have so much need of the wisest counsels and the best men. Our Perkinses and Lawrences and Appletons, our Lyman and Eliot and Josiah Bradlee and good Moses Grant — I cannot recall them all: but how much of the proudest and worthiest part of our local history is associated with names like these! Let us have no fear, however, that the race of our public-spirited men is yet exhausted. Let us not even linger around the honored remains which we are about to follow to the grave, as if it were possible that the succession of public benefactors, with which we have so long been blessed, were coming to an end. *Uno avulso, non deficit aureus alter.* Such examples can never be lost on the generations which are rising up to occupy the vacant places. Nor can Boston ever be without sons who will uphold her ancient renown for liberality and munificence.

Yet at this hour, perhaps, we may not be quite able to repress a doubt, whether, in the long centuries of prosperity which we trust may still be in reserve for our beloved city, there will be found, among those who shall successively inhabit it, a name which will be associated with greater purity and greater beneficence, and around which will be clustered memories more precious, for time and for eternity, than that of the lamented friend to whom we have assembled to pay this farewell tribute of respect and gratitude.

It only remains for me, Sir, to second the resolutions; which I do with all my heart.

The meeting then adjourned to attend the funeral services.

THE FUNERAL SERVICES.

The funeral services were held at St. Paul's (Episcopal) Church at twelve o'clock, noon. A large number of the relatives and friends of the deceased, with many members of the City Government, were present. The remains, enclosed in a rosewood coffin trimmed with silver and covered with flowers, were carried from his late residence in Beacon

Street to the church, where they were received by the warden and vestrymen. The bearers were Sullivan Warren, George H. Lyman, Isaac Emery, Benjamin F. Hallett, James B. Upham, and John P. Putnam. The solemn burial service of the Episcopal Church was conducted by Rev. Dr. A. H. Vinton, Bishop Potter of Pennsylvania, Rev. Dr. Stone of Brookline, and the Rector of St. Paul's.

After the ceremonies, the body was accompanied to Mount Auburn by a very large company in carriages. The closing service of the Episcopal Church was read at the grave.

MEETING OF THE WARDENS AND VESTRY OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH.

Mr. Appleton was one of the founders of St. Paul's Church in this city; of which he continued to be an active member, and was one of the wardens, at the time of his death. He was warmly interested in all the concerns of that parish; and it is largely indebted to him for its signal prosperity and efficiency. St. Stephen's Church in this city was built and endowed by his liberality; and there has been hardly any enterprise connected with the interests of our church in this diocese, or in the country at large, which has not had the benefit of his wise counsels and liberal benefactions. He has been a frequent delegate from St. Paul's Church to our Diocesan Convention; and, for many years, he has been unanimously chosen by the Convention as one of the delegation from this diocese to the General Convention. He was warmly attached to the Protestant-Episcopal Church, and alive to all its interests. Our whole communion mourn his departure; yet they feel, that in such a calm, clear, peaceful close of a long life of honor and of Christian usefulness, there are grounds of abundant consolation, not only for themselves, but for those who are still more nearly and deeply bereaved.

The funeral of Mr. Appleton was attended at St. Paul's Church by a very large concourse of his fellow-citizens and friends. Many

of the clergy of our church were present. The services were conducted by the Rt. Rev. Alonzo Potter, D.D., Bishop of Pennsylvania, the Rev. John S. Stone, D.D., Rev. Alexander H. Vinton, D.D., and the Rev. William R. Nicholson, D.D. These clergymen have all sustained the relation of pastor to Mr. Appleton, as rectors of St. Paul's; and their presence added much to the solemnity and impressiveness of the occasion.

At a meeting of the Wardens and Vestry of St. Paul's Church in Boston, held on Sunday, Feb. 16, in the vestry of the church, the following preamble and resolutions were unanimously adopted: —

Whereas, It has pleased our heavenly Father to take to himself our late friend and associate, the Hon. William Appleton; and —

Whereas, Mr. Appleton was one of the founders of St. Paul's Church, and has, from its earliest history, retained a most lively interest in its welfare, both temporal and spiritual, — having been, for many years, one of the wardens of the church, and ready at all times to increase its prosperity by his counsel and his means; and —

Whereas, For these reasons, and from our sincere regard, respect, and love for the deceased, it is peculiarly fitting that this vestry should take appropriate notice of his death: therefore —

Resolved, That, in the death of Mr. Appleton, we acknowledge the hand of our heavenly Father, who doeth all things well; and bow in submission to his will.

Resolved, That we sincerely sympathize with the afflicted family and friends of the deceased in being called to part with one upon whom they have leaned with so much confidence, love, and respect.

Resolved, That St. Paul's Church has lost one of its earliest and best friends; one who ever rejoiced in her prosperity, and counselled her in her trials and prosperity; one who, to the day of his death, loved her with a sincere and strong affection.

Resolved, That the calm, steady, and firm Christian character of the deceased, his unvaried kindness towards all of us, his judicious counsels and firm integrity, have always endeared him to us, and will be ever kept fresh in our memory.

Resolved, That the mercantile profession has lost one of its brightest ornaments, the Church one of its most steady and consistent members, the poor a kind and constant friend, our benevolent institutions one of their most liberal benefactors, and the country a firm

supporter of the Constitution; and, while we all mourn his loss, our grief is mitigated by the reflection, that he has exchanged a life full of trials for one of peace and joy, and, in full trust in the merits of his Saviour for his acceptance, has gone down to his grave, full of years and full of honors.

Resolved, That, in token of our respect for the memory of the deceased, we will attend his funeral as a body.

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be transmitted by the clerk to the family of the deceased, and to the "Christian Witness" for publication.

A true copy from the record.

Attest: J. P. Putnam, *Clerk*.

(*From the "Christian Witness."*)

MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL.

The Corporation of the Massachusetts General Hospital held a special meeting at the hospital, for the purpose, chiefly, of taking action in relation to the death of its President, the late Hon. William Appleton. The Vice-President, Robert Hooper, Esq., presided; and T. B. Hall, Esq., officiated as secretary. After appropriate eulogies, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted: —

Resolved, That, in the death of the Hon. William Appleton, this corporation has met with a great loss. He was connected with the management of its affairs for twenty-five years; always with a lively interest in the prosecution of its charitable purposes. The institution is greatly indebted to his prudent counsels, as well as to his well-directed benevolence. His munificent donations enabled the trustees to do much for the comfort, as well as for the cure, of those insane whose limited means might otherwise have deprived them of the full

advantages of a residence at the asylum. The fund which he established for the assistance of the curable insane has abounded in rich fruits. The buildings bearing his name at Somerville, which were erected at his suggestion and chiefly by his bounty, are honorable monuments both of his sagacity and of his benevolence.

Resolved, That a copy of these proceedings be communicated to the family of Mr. Appleton, with assurances of the sympathy of the members of the corporation with them in their bereavement, and of their appreciation of the honorable and Christian character of the deceased.

The following brief and appropriate tribute to Mr. Appleton is copied from the Annual Report of the Superintendent of the M'Lean Asylum for the Insane for the year 1862: —

"Holding for many years the position of Trustee and President, Mr. Appleton became thoroughly acquainted with and interested in the real wants of those for whose necessities this institution was established, and gave his influence and his wealth, heartily and munificently, to carry out, to the fullest extent possible, its beneficent purposes for their relief. The 'Appleton Wards,' contributing all that elegance and convenience can contribute to the contentment of their occupants, and hiding, by their comfortable and cheerful arrangements, the necessities for restraint, and compensating, as far as possible, for a withdrawal from home; and the 'Appleton Fund, for the assistance and support of needy, curable patients,' giving aid at just the time of the greatest necessity, and causing a daily increasing number, with the return of health and reason, to bless the unknown giver for the means of recovery, — these proofs of his discriminating and far-sighted benevolence, conspicuous among the unnumbered charities by which he constantly and yet unostentatiously consecrated his wealth and transmuted it into the treasures of heaven, will environ his memory for ever with gratitude and admiration, and clothe his name with the unsullied honor which only follows an earnest Christian life."

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

At a stated meeting of the Massachusetts Historical Society, held on Thursday, March 13, 1862, the President, Hon. Robert C. Winthrop. — after alluding to the late Hon. Luther V. Bell, as the only member of the Society who had yet fallen in the military service of the country, and before paying a tribute to the memory of the late President Felton, — announced the death of the Hon. William Appleton, as follows: —

It would hardly be quite just, however, to the memory of another lamented associate, — the Hon. William Appleton, — whose death we are next called on to notice this evening, were we to forget that his immediate decline was undoubtedly accelerated by the labors and cares with which his strength had been overtasked in the civil service of the Union. As a member of the House of Representatives of the United States, he remained faithfully at his post, during the anxious and agitating session of the last summer, long after his health had become so seriously impaired as to excite the just apprehensions of his friends. His commercial information and financial experience were indispensable to the committee of which he was a member, and his colleagues on that committee were unwilling to spare him from their councils. He returned home at last, debilitated and exhausted; and resigned his seat only in season to make final preparations for the change which so soon awaited him.

It has already been my privilege to unite with our fellow-citizens in paying a tribute to this excellent man and public benefactor; and I forbear from adding any thing on this occasion to the simple announcement of his death.

Dr. Lothrop then offered the following remarks: —

We have noticed the death of the scholar, whose mind, through reading and study, was richly stored with all the learning of the schools; who, in early childhood, took to books as the food of his life, and had passed almost the whole of that life in the quiet groves of the academy; and who, by his literary labors and his distinguished

literary position, was widely known, and largely honored, and eminently useful. At the University, where we hoped he would have a long and brilliant career as its President; in this modern Athens, as our city has sometimes been called; far away in that old Athens of Greece, to which you, sir, have so felicitously referred, where to many his form was as familiar, and his name as honored and beloved, as among ourselves; everywhere throughout the great republic of letters, — his death is and will be felt to be a calamity; and here in this Society, this evening, we all respond most heartily to the just and beautiful tributes which gentlemen, themselves so distinguished, have paid to his memory.

But we all know, Mr. President, that the unwritten wisdom of the world far exceeds the written. There is more of talent and genius in every generation than shows itself in books or in what we emphasize as learning and scholarship. The intellectual ability requisite, and often exhibited, in various departments of practical business in life, is fully equal, if it do not surpass, that exhibited in what we designate as purely literary pursuits. For a man to raise himself to the first rank among the merchants of a great city or country, — not, I mean, simply to amass a great fortune, but to form a character, establish a reputation, reach a position from which he exercises a commanding influence in all commercial and financial affairs, his advice sought, his judgment appealed to, his wisdom relied upon in the chambers of commerce and in the councils of the cabinet, — for a man to do this requires as much talent, a degree of intellectual vigor and acumen as great, as for another to raise himself to the first rank among scholars. Our Massachusetts Historical Society has always honored itself by calling to its ranks, and having on its roll of members, some representatives of this class of men: not because they were learned men, in the ordinary meaning of that word; not because they were particularly interested in historical pursuits or studies: but because they were men of vigorous intellect; because they were men, who, by the energy of their minds, and the activity of their lives, and the largeness of their commercial enterprises, had exerted, or were exerting, an important influence upon all those social institutions, interests, and events that enter into the composition of history, and form a part of the great reservoir from which history draws its materials.

The loss of such a man from our record of membership we are called to notice and regret this evening, in the death of the late Hon. William Appleton. The outline of his life is familiar to most of us,

and corresponds to that of many of the merchants of this city who have risen to distinguished eminence and usefulness. The son of a clergyman in a small town in Worcester County, with only the education that could be furnished him by the district school and the county academy, he came to this town while yet in his teens, with no capital but his talents, his energy, his industry, his sound principles, his pure morals, and his honorable aims; and, through them, he worked his way to the distinguished commercial, social, and political position which he has so long occupied.

One of the prominent qualities exhibited in Mr. Appleton's character and career seems to have been an indomitable energy, that insisted upon achieving success. — insisted upon persevering, and keeping at work, even under that great discouragement of ill health, before which most men succumb. From his early manhood, Mr. Appleton has always been an invalid. Nearly half a century ago, he made his will, and sailed from this port on a voyage for his health, with but the slightest possible prospect, the faintest possible hope, of returning alive. Through the good providence of God, and, without irreverence I may say it (for the influence of such mental feeling in staying the progress of disease is an admitted fact), through the indomitable determination of his own mind that he would get well, he did get well enough to return, and resume business. He lived to administer upon the estates of all the gentlemen who were named as his own executors in his original will. From the time of his return from that voyage up to a few months ago, with a body so frail and light that one almost feared sometimes that the wind would blow him away; with his health often so feeble, that it seemed sometimes as if in a few weeks his strength must utterly fail, and death claim its own; with a resolution and pluck that would have gained him every battle had he been a general; with an industry, wisdom, and intellectual astuteness, that would have placed him at the head of the bar had he been a lawyer, or at the head of the nation had he given himself exclusively to politics and statesmanship, — he has persevered, done a vast amount of work, and been remarkable among our merchants for his energy, activity, and enterprise. Mr. Appleton had a vigorous, penetrating, comprehensive intellect, by which he embraced alike, and with equal ease, both the principles and details of any subject to which he gave his attention. I need scarcely add, that this intellect was under the guidance of high principles, sanctified by religious faith and culture. He was a man of unsullied integrity, of singular purity, and

of large benevolence. It was these qualities that gave wisdom to his judgment in all commercial and financial matters; caused it to be honored and confided in on the Exchange, in the walks of business, and in the councils of state; and secured an almost certain success to his enterprises. It was these qualities that led to his being designated and twice elected, by the merchants and citizens of Boston, to represent them in the Congress of the United States; a post which he filled with honor to himself, and with usefulness to his constituents and to the country. It was through these qualities that he amassed a large fortune; which was not hoarded for selfish purposes, but used in various ways for the good of others. Mr. Appleton was always a liberal giver, both in private charities and to public institutions and interests; but always, of course, making his own selections, according to his own judgment, and, where that judgment was adverse, expressing it with a refusal so prompt and decisive, that his character may have been misunderstood and misinterpreted sometimes by those not intimately acquainted with him. But he was faithful to his trusts, and gave largely from large means.

Mr. President, the two deaths which we notice this evening awaken different emotions. President Felton was in the very vigor of his manhood, in the full maturity of his intellectual and moral powers, with his natural strength unabated, with a growing fame, and an increasing usefulness in an official position for which he had a rare combination of qualities. His death is the extinction of many and grand hopes, and it costs us an effort to bow to the inscrutable decrees of Providence. Mr. Appleton had passed beyond the allotted term of human life, and was sinking into the vale of years. He had accomplished the purposes of this earthly pilgrimage; and we acquiesce easily in the wisdom and the mercy that released him. His life, so full of energy, activity, usefulness, benevolence, impregnated and pervaded throughout by the spirit of a humble faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, closed in sincerity and peace, leaving behind it that memory of the just which is blessed, while the immortal spirit passed on to a holier rest and better happiness than can be found on earth.

I see around me, sir, several gentlemen more nearly his contemporaries, and more competent to speak of Mr. Appleton, than I am. I hope they will do so. At your request, and because of late years, through some associations, I have been thrown into somewhat intimate relations with him, I have assumed the privilege of paying this tribute to his memory.

Colonel Aspinwall spoke substantially as follows : —

In rising to comply with a rather sudden call to support the resolutions now before the meeting, I am reminded, that, within the year, the honored name of Appleton has, in two instances, been struck from the list of our living associates.

When our lamented colleague, the Hon. Nathan Appleton, was taken from us, I was prevented, by imperative circumstances, from uniting in any public manifestation of sorrow for the great loss sustained by the whole community, and particularly by our own Society, in the death of an individual so eminent for his public and private virtues, as a merchant and a legislator, as a promoter of our national industry and commerce, and as a political economist.

Now another of the name, the Hon. William Appleton, has also terminated his earthly career; and perhaps it is not entirely out of place that a surviving colleague, whose years have already passed the ordinary limits of life, should say a few words in honor of one whose distinguished peculiarity it was always to feel, that, "in the midst of life, we are in death." This predominating feeling, arising from a feeble and precarious condition of health, gave a character to his whole conduct. It kept him in constant preparation for the hour of death and the day of judgment. It taught him the insignificance of the concerns of this brief existence, in comparison with those of eternity. It made him pre-eminently a man of truth, integrity, justice, and benevolence.

It has been said that he was passionately devoted to the accumulation of wealth. The fact might have been plausibly questioned or denied; but he was himself the first to avow it. The extent and multiplicity of his charities and benefactions show very plainly, that, whatever may have been the intensity of his love of wealth, it was always kept in subjection to his regard for the interests of his fellow-creatures, and his reverence for the will of his heavenly Father.

In this assembly, where the character and merits of Mr. Appleton in his domestic and public relations are well known, as they are throughout the whole community, it is not my purpose to say any thing of his excellences as a citizen, a merchant, or a legislator. All these have been already admirably portrayed by the reverend member who preceded me here, and in the eulogies delivered elsewhere by two of our ablest and most eloquent associates.

But having, for many years, occupied an official station in London,

which brought me into constant familiarity with our commercial interests and the individuals connected with them, I would mention, that Mr. Appleton's character was well known in Europe, and as highly estimated there as it is here. In many a commercial crisis that occurred during the term of my residence abroad, I know that his opinion was sought for and confidently relied on by many friends of our country, not only in regard to matters of commerce and finance, but also upon political subjects of grave importance.

Soon after my return to this country, I had the opportunity of witnessing, at Washington, the marked respect and regard paid him, even by his political adversaries; and of learning, also, that he was considered as almost the guide and teacher of the Committee of Ways and Means, to which he belonged.

In later years, it has been my good fortune to cultivate and enjoy his acquaintance, and to become more conversant with his good deeds and high principles. I have ever found him a friend, a good man, and one who did not fear to die.

The following resolution was then unanimously adopted: —

Resolved, That this Society has heard, with the deepest regret, of the death of their esteemed and respected associate, the Hon. William Appleton; and that Dr. Chandler Robbins be requested to prepare the customary Memoir of Mr. Appleton for the Proceedings.

STRIKING COINCIDENCES.

Those who were present at the funeral of Mr. Appleton on Tuesday last were deeply impressed with the circumstance, that all the clergymen living, who have been rectors of St. Paul's Church, were present in the chancel, and officiating in the solemn burial service. Since its formation in 1820, this church has had *five* rectors; of whom the Rev. Dr. Jarvis was the first. He was followed, successively, by the Rev. Alonzo Potter, D.D., Bishop of Pennsylvania, the Rev. John S. Stone, D.D., the Rev. A. H. Vinton, D.D., and

the present rector, Rev. William R. Nicholson, D.D. It was remarkable that so many prominent clergymen, who have been highly esteemed in their connection with this church, and very intimately associated with Mr. Appleton in their pastoral relations, should have officiated at his funeral.

It was also a striking fact, that the funeral procession had hardly passed from the church, on its way to Mount Auburn, before the whole city was stirred with the patriotic demonstrations of rejoicing which had been ordered by the mayor to celebrate the recent victories that have gladdened the heart of our nation. The salutes were postponed for one hour in consideration of the funeral; and they then fell not inappropriately upon the ear. It was fitting that so prominent a public man, and one of the firmest supporters of our Constitution, should be borne to his grave amid the first echoes of a rejoicing which is the harbinger of restored union and peace to our beloved country. — *Christian Witness.*

MEMOIR

OF

HON. WILLIAM APPLETON.

PREPARED AGREEABLY TO A RESOLUTION

OF THE

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

BY

REV. CHANDLER ROBBINS, D.D.

With an Appendix.

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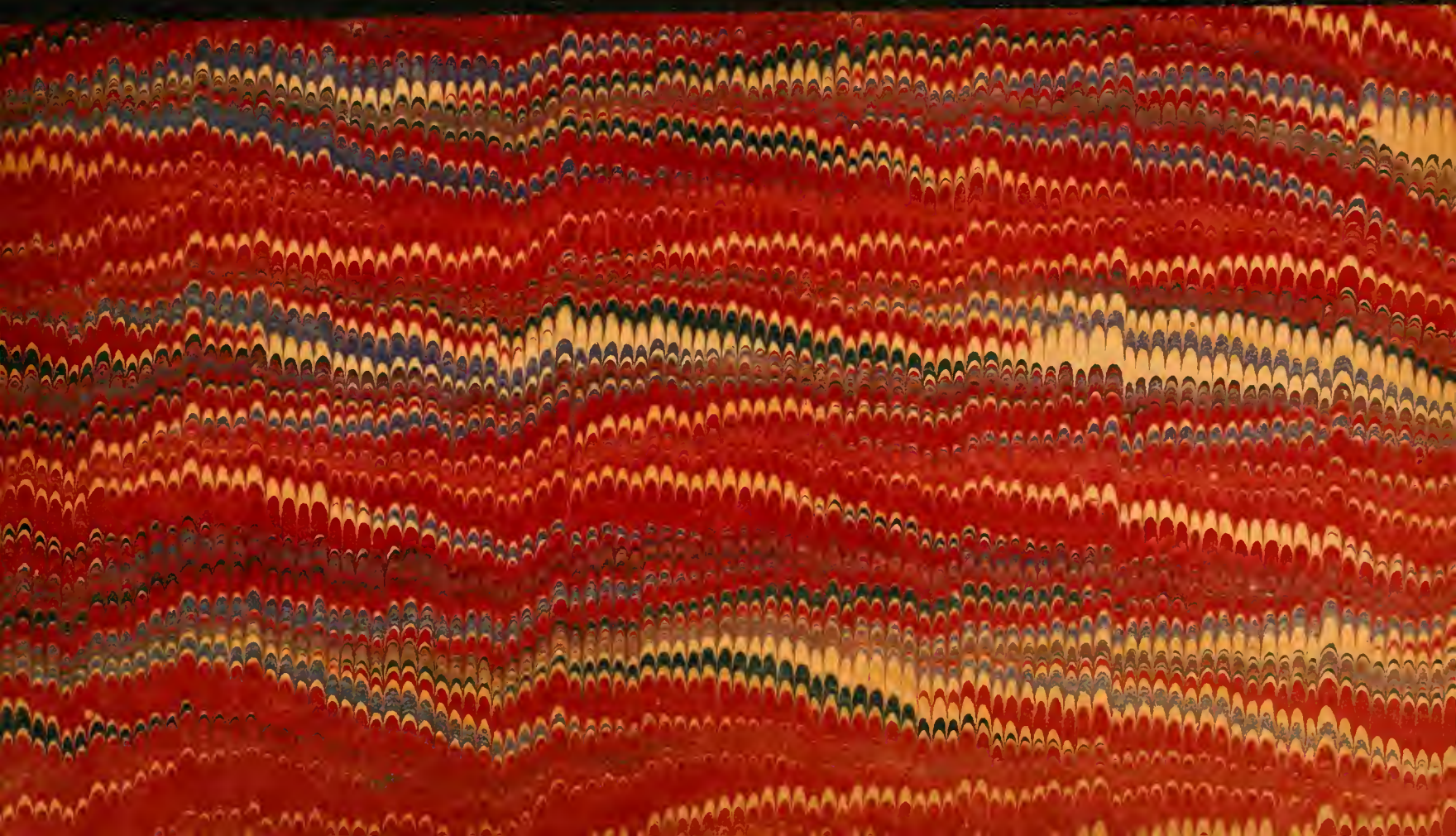

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